THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The appointment of Gangmen from among the licensed porters has led to the shortage at the stations of Delhi. The process of engagement of fresh licensed porters to overcome the shortage could not be initiated as a large number of these newly appointed gangmen have submitted representations for restoring their badges to work again as licensed porters. The sanctioned and existing strength of licensed porters at major stations of Delhi is as under:

Name of stations	Sanctioned strength	Existing strength
New Delhi	1407	648
Delhi Main	830	247
Hazrat Nizammudin	431	316
Delhi Sarai Rohilla	25	16

To ensure availability of licensed porters, redeployment of licensed porters within the division is being resorted to till such time the process of engaging fresh licensed porters could be initiated. The requirement of licensed porters at Delhi main station is being reviewed and rationalized so that the surplus could be redeployed at New Delhi where there is major shortage. To overcome the problem of overcharging and exploitation by licensed porters, regular checks are being conducted at these stations. The badges of licensed porters involved in such activities are being impounded/suspended.

Grabbing of railway's land

698. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases with area of land and structure belonging to Railways in Karnataka under adverse possession as on 1st January, 2009;

(b) the action taken, so far, in each case to have the same vacated/restored;

(c) whether the involvement of railway officials in land grabbing has been investigated; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against those involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) State-wise details of encroachments on railway land are not maintained. The State of Karnataka is covered by four zonal Railways, namely Central, Southern, South Central and South Western Railways. There are 40331 number of encroachments covering area of 181.44 hectare as per details given below.

Railway Zone	Number	Area (Hectare)
Central	27352	74
Southern	9709	64.8
South Central	2728	26.27
South Western	542	16.37
TOTAL :	40331	181.44

(b) Railways are engaged in a continuous exercise to free their land of encroachments as per provisions contained in the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 and Railways Act, 1989.

(c) and (d) Involvement of railway officials in land grabbing has not been established or reported so far.

Replacement of old rail tracks in Tamil Nadu

699. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that there is a need to evaluate and assess the strength of rail tracks between Madurai and Dindigul and Madurai and Virudhunagar since these rail tracks are many decade old;

(b) if so, whether Government proposed to replace those weak rail tracks laid many decades ago leading possibilities for any mishap in those railway lines of Tamil Nadu;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Regular assessment for strengthening of rail tracks between Madurai and Dindigul and Madurai and Virudhunagar are being done and action being taken on priority basis.

(b) Replacement of rails is being planned as per requirement in phased manner.

(c) In Madurai-Dindigul section, about 28 km of rails have been replaced during the current year and further replacement of rails is in progress. In Madurai-Virudhunagar section also rail renewal is in progress.

(d) Does not arise.

Revision of railway freight

700. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on and from February 1, 2009 classifications of chemical manures, foodgrains, flours and pulses have been revised for the purpose of revision of railway freight;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) why such increase in freight has been announced through administrative order on the eve of placement of Railway budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Classification of Main Commodity Head 'Chemical Manures' and 'Foodgrains, Flours and Pulses' has been revised from Class-120 to Class-130.

(c) Revision of freight rates is an ongoing exercise and is being done throughout the year as and when required.